Inside Wallops

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Goddard Space Flight Center
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NASA Selects Explorer Mission Proposals For Feasibility Studies

NASA recently selected candidate mission proposals that would study the universe, from Jupiter and the sun to black holes and dark matter. The proposals are candidates for missions in NASA's Explorer Program.

Following detailed mission concept studies, NASA intends to select two of the mission proposals by fall 2004 for full development as Small Explorer (SMEX) missions. The two missions will be launched in 2007 and 2008.

NASA Scientific Balloon

NASA has also decided to fund as a "Mission of Opportunity" a balloon-borne experiment to detect high-energy neutrinos, ghostly particles that fill the universe.

"The Small Explorer mission proposals show that the scientific community has a lot of innovative ideas on ways to study some of the most vexing questions in science, and to do it on a relatively small budget," said Dr. Ed Weiler, associate administrator for space science at NASA Headquarters.

The selected proposals were judged to have the best science value among 36 submitted to NASA in February 2003. Each will receive $450,000 ($250,000 for the Mission of Opportunity) to conduct a five-month implementation feasibility study. The selected SMEX proposals are:

* The Normal-incidence Extreme Ultraviolet Spectrometer (NEXUS): a solar spectrometer with major advances in sensitivity and resolution to reveal the cause of coronal heating and solar wind acceleration. Joseph M. Davila of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center would lead NEXUS at a total mission cost to NASA of $131 million.

* The Dark Universe Observatory (DUO): seven X-ray telescopes to measure the dark matter and dark energy that dominate the content of the universe with 100 times the sensitivity of previous X-ray studies. Richard E. Griffiths of Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, would lead DUO at a total mission cost to NASA of $132 million.

* The Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX): a pair of cameras to image the boundary between the solar system and interstellar space with 100 times the sensitivity of previous experiments. David J. McComas of the Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, would lead IBEX at a total mission cost to NASA of $132 million.

* The Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array (NuSTAR): a telescope to carry out a census of black holes with 1000 times more sensitivity than previous experiments. NuSTAR would be lead by Fiona Anne Harrison of the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, at a total mission cost to NASA of $132 million.

* The Jupiter Magnetospheric Explorer (JMEX): a telescope to study Jupiter's aurora and magnetosphere from Earth orbit. Nicholas M. Schneider of the University of Colorado at Boulder would lead JMEX, at a total mission cost to NASA of $133 million.

NASA selected a long-duration balloon payload as the mission of opportunity.

The Antarctic Impulsive Transient Antenna (ANITA) would detect radio waves emitted when high-energy neutrinos interact in the Antarctic ice shelf. ANITA would be led by Peter W. Gorham of the University of Hawaii at Manoa in Honolulu, at a total mission cost to NASA of $35 million.

In addition, NASA selected a proposed mission for technology-development funding of the proposed instrument. Jean Swank of GSFC will develop a polarization sensitive X-ray detector. Swank will receive up to $300,000 over the next two years for her study.

The Explorer Program, managed by GSFC for NASA's Office of Space Science, is designed to provide frequent, low-cost access to space for physics and astronomy missions with small to mid-sized spacecraft.

NASA Ranks First in Best Places to Work in the Federal Government

by Sean O'Keefe, Administrator

The Partnership for Public Service and American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation has released the results of a comprehensive survey of federal government employees on various aspects of job satisfaction. NASA ranked first among all federal agencies in the survey. The results reflect the positive attitude of our workforce and their involvement in the NASA mission.

This first ever survey of more than 100,000 government employees graded all the federal agencies on several categories related to employee satisfaction.

NASA scored near or at the top of the list in the following categories: effective leadership (top ranking); teamwork (top ranking); strategic management (second ranking); having a strong match between employee skills and their agency's mission (second ranking); strength of performance-based rewards and advancement (top ranking); training and development opportunities (top ranking); support for diversity (top ranking); work/life balance (top ranking); pay and benefits (third ranking); and family friendly culture and benefits (top ranking).

According to the survey, the top five federal agencies to work for are: NASA, National Science Foundation, Office of Management and Budget, General Services Administration and Environmental Protection Agency. The survey also provided a breakdown of employee satisfaction at subagencies, or in our case, NASA centers. The top three federal subagencies to work for are NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, Johnson Space Center and Goddard Space Flight Center, with the Langley Research Center listed as ninth. You can learn more about the survey and the results on the web at: http://www.bestplacestowork.org.

I am convinced that our unceasing efforts to enhance mission safety and develop an organizational culture that empowers open dialogue will help us become an even stronger Agency in the weeks and months ahead.

2003 Most Improved Site Safety Award

Ken Reightler, Consolidated Space Operations Contract (CSOC) Program Manager, visited Wallops on Tuesday, November 4, to present the Wallops CSOC employees and members of the CSOC Wallops Organizational Safety Committee with the "2003 Most Improved Site Safety Award". The award celebrates the CSOC safety slogan: "Considering Safety Our Cornerstone".

Photo by Lee Wingfield

Those present included (L to R) Michelle Williams, Tom Millard, Warren McNeil, Tom Godbout, Rob Cass, J.R. Hendrickson, Joel Smith, Matt Schneider, Dan Bowden, Ken Reightler, Ted Wilz, Michael Conger, Ken Griffin, Mark Harris, Ben Benthall, Norris Beasley, Mel Conser, Dean Carroll, Melody Lewis, Ron Walsh, Ralph Wooten, Jeff Jester, Genise Holden, Debbie Stanley, and Steve Jones. Not pictured but present: Dr. John Campbell, Lee Wingfield and Jim Mason-Foley

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Sympathy to the family of
Ferrell Edwin Weatherman, Jr.
who died in Inova Fairfax Hospital on October 30.

Weatherman retired from NASA Wallops Flight Center as a technician. He is survived by his wife, Mary; two daughters, a son, five grandchildren and two great-grandsons

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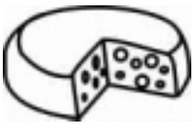
It's That Time Again!



WEMA will be accepting cheese orders through November 19

Order forms are available in the Wallops Exchange, Building E2 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call George Brothers on x1528 for further information.

For Sale

United Commercial Freezer. 19.7 cubic foot. $100. Call Linda Snellings on x2222 or (757) 336-5498.

One NASA Workshop

The One NASA Workshop events on November 19 from Goddard will be aired live at Wallops. Employees can view the sessions on Wallops Channel 6 or in Room 213, Bldg. F-6.

9 - 11:30 a.m. All-hands
Speakers include:
Al Diaz, Director, GSFC
Bill Readdy, AA, Code M
Roy Bridges, Director, LaRC

2 - 3 p.m. NASA Engineering and Safety Center

3:15 - 4:15 p.m. NASA Shared Services Center

DynCorp Provides Assistance

Roy Bridges, Jr.
Director, Langley Research Center

"On September 18, the Langley Research Center experienced the effects of Hurricane Isabel. Early storm reports indicated a potentially devastating event. The decision was made to evacuate as many aircraft as possible to secure locations. Due to our pilot staff limitations and the vagaries of the storm, we requested and received the assistance of DynCorp Wallops.

DynCorp provided Jeff Martin and Scott Mesmer, an experienced, qualified crew for movement of the Boeing 757 aircraft to safety. Mike Singer supported the movement of four Langley aircraft by piloting the Be-200 and shuttling Langley pilots to and from deployed evacuation sites.

The "We can do it" attitude demonstrated during the aircraft evacuation from the Center was an excellent example of One NASA and cooperation between Centers as well as contracts.

DynCorp enabled Langley to safeguard its assets and efficiently move its flight crews in such a manner that they were able to return to base before the hurricane's arrival to secure their homes and families. Equally important was the return of all the aircraft after the storm had passed by the same crews, in the same professional and expeditious manner.

Please convey our gratitude to everyone involved in this outstanding accomplishment."

Wallops Shorts…….

In the News

Eastern Shore Post
"New NASA Project Based at Wallops"

Space Ref.com
"NASA Exploring Potential of Small UAVs for Earth Studies"

SpaceFlight Now
"NASA Exploring Potential of Small UAVs for Earth Studies"

Rocky Mountain News
"Dem drones, dem drones……."

On the Road

Keith Koehler, NASA Public Affairs Office, was the guest speaker for the Salisbury Rotary Club on November 4.

Dave Wilcox, NASA Carrier Systems Branch, spoke to 4th grade students at Broadwater Academy on November 14.

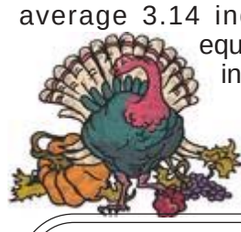
About Average Weather For October

by Bob Steiner, Meteorologist

October 2003 came and went with little fanfare, weather wise. The temperature averaged 57.6 degrees, one degree above average. The warmest day was October 8 with a reading of 77 degrees. The coldest morning was on the 24th when the mercury fell to 32 degrees. No record temperatures were set or tied.

Measurable rain fell on 10 days during the month, 8 days being average, for a total of 3.07 inches. This was 0.20 inches above average. The greatest amount of rain in 24 hours was 2.02 inches, on October 28 and 29.

December brings the holidays and cooler temperatures. Daytime highs start out near 52 degrees, decreasing to about 46 degrees towards the end of the month. The warmest temperature recorded in December is 77 degrees reading on Dec. 7, 1998. The coolest morning on record is four degrees recorded on Dec. 21, 1989. Measurable precipitation falls on an average of nine days in December with measurable snow on one day. We average 3.14 inches of liquid equivalent and 1.26 inches of snow.



Stay safe and have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Inside Wallops is an official publication of Goddard Space Flight Center and is published by the Wallops Office of Public Affairs, Extension 1584, in the interest of Wallops employees. Recent and past issues of *Inside Wallops* may be found on the NASA Wallops Flight Facility homepage: www.wff.nasa.gov

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